**PRESS RELEASE**

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SABIR AND ROPELLA NAMED 2023 IMPRINT AWARD WINNERS

WITH SOMMERS-HERZOG AS AWARD ARTIST

MILWAUKEE, WI – Professional Dimensions is proud to announce the two women that have been selected as the 2023 Imprint Award winners. JoAnne Sabir and Dr. Kristina Ropella will be recognized at the annual Imprint Award event on March 30, 2023, at the Pfister Hotel.

These women have made a notable impact within their organizations and the community resulting in glowing nominations and well-deserved selection for the Imprint Award. Their efforts, investments and leadership have had a great influence on improving Milwaukee.

JoAnne Sabir

JoAnne Sabir is a community development leader in Milwaukee and a serial founder/ co-founder including ventures such as Sherman Phoenix, Shindig LLC juice company, and Freedom Endeavors Business Coaching and Real Estate. JoAnne is a champion for the community through various initiatives and businesses that support the underserved and create safe spaces, entrepreneurial prospects, and employment for members of diverse districts. Beyond her entrepreneurial endeavors, Sabir also serves as a Community & Social Impact Manager for American Family Insurance where she continues to impact lives. JoAnne received her Bachelor degree from Clark Atlanta University and went on to earn her Masters of Social Work degree at UW-Milwaukee, in the city she has been leaving an imprint on ever since. Having been named a 40 under 40 recipient, Community Leader of the Year, and Milwaukee Business Journal Executive of the Year, among other honors, Sabir has clearly demonstrated her fit for the Imprint Award as a female leader who has left a lasting impact on the Milwaukee area and its people.

Kristina Ropella

Dr. Kristina (Kris) Ropella is a higher education leader, dedicated educator, biomedical engineering researcher, board member and currently serves as the Opus Dean of Marquette’s Opus College of Engineering. As a trailblazer in the engineering and higher education spaces, Ropella was the first female engineering Dean at Marquette University. Her personal mission is to change the face of engineering which she is striving for by opening doors for diverse representation and promoting servant leadership. Her initiatives such as the Excellence in Leadership (E-Lead) program, a leadership development program, and her research and publications have already left a meaningful impact on the engineering industry and community. She received her Master’s degree and Ph.D. from Northwestern University but has a history with the Milwaukee area having received her Bachelor’s degree from Marquette. Her impressive accolades include KEEN Outstanding Dean Award, the STEM Forward Engineer of the Year, and the Milwaukee Business Journal’s 40 Under 40 and Women of Influence, among many other recognitions, with the Professional Dimension’s Imprint Award as a rightful addition.

Both deserving recipients were selected for their ability to leave a lasting imprint in their professional and community roles. These highly successful women are making the community better and mentoring and inspiring the next generation of leaders.

Per the Imprint Award tradition, each recipient is celebrated with an award that is created by a local female artist. Lynda Sommers-Herzog has been selected to create this year’s custom Imprint Award art piece to recognize Sabir and Ropella at the annual Imprint Award event.

Sommer-Herzog’s art is reflective of the trailblazing women who will be honored at the event and also has a notable presence in the Milwaukee community.

“Yellow Moon” Original Art Piece for the 2023 Imprint Awards by: Lynda Sommers-Herzog

Lynda Sommers-Herzog is a professional artist, an associate professor of art and the director/curator of the Art & Cultures Gallery, Kellogg Photography Gallery and the IMPRINT Gallery and Public Spaces art curator at Alverno College. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture with an emphasis in Foundry and a Bachelor of Arts Ceramics and currently teaches numerous art courses. She is a trailblazer in the sculpture field by providing opportunity for more women to learn non-traditional mechanical skills such as casting and welding, areas traditionally dominated by men. Sommers-Herzog gains inspiration for her art from nature, with pieces such as her Heritage Tree, a 14 x 20 ft wall sculpture created for Aurora-Mt Sinai, among the beautiful artwork that can be seen throughout our Milwaukee community.

**About Professional Dimensions**

Professional Dimensions is the leading women’s professional association in the Milwaukee area whose mission is to unite women leaders in the relentless pursuit of better. We create opportunities for our members to network, collaborate, learn, and lead, inspiring women to reach for more in all aspects of their lives. Our organization is intentionally inclusive across career experiences and personal identities, maximizing our ability to innovate and elevate those around us. Professional Dimensions challenges leaders to blaze trails in their companies and communities. Our driving ambition is to expand what is possible for women and the world they influence**.**

Professional Dimensions’ Imprint award was created in 2021 to recognize two women who are making a lasting mark in their career, community, and collaborations, following a year-long reimagining of PD’s longstanding Sacajawea award. These women are both successful and supportive. Their accomplishments are celebrated with a custom award created by a local female artist whose quality, experience and art design align with the Imprint Award. Professional Dimensions is honored to celebrate the lasting impacts of these women.

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